

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : That does not mean that there were deaths due to starvation.

MR. K. A. MATHEW : That shows the existence of poverty.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : That is an entirely different question.

PRESIDENT : Order, order. This is just the type of question that I was referring to. The honourable member has made the suggestion in this question that there were deaths due to starvation. The Dewan went to the place and asked various responsible organisations, the Ramakrishna Mission, the S. N. D. P., the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., and various others whether they had come across any such incidents. They all said definitely—letters from them are in the Secretariat files—that there were no deaths by starvation although a certain number of people had found it difficult to buy rations at the price fixed for them. It was also pointed out that the labouring people were getting higher wages than at any time before, and that if anybody suffered, it was those with fixed incomes, like the lower paid Government servants. Therefore, in order to relieve the stress, a promise was made to pay Rs. 500 a month to the various organisations. It is significant that not one of these organisations has drawn that sum of Rs. 500 per month. The amount is available to these organisations for the relief of distress, but neither the S. N. D. P., nor the other organisations like the Ramakrishna Mission, or the Y. M. C. A., has drawn it. Until the 16th January 1945 no action was taken by the organisations concerned regarding the subsidy made on the 21st November 1944. Government therefore again addressed these organisations requesting them to state whether they have not gone into the matter. The reply from the S. N. D. P. has been verified by the local Tahsildar. He has eliminated 146 units from the list submitted by the S. N. D. P. and selected 156 units. The Vanchi Poor Fund at Alleppey said they were taking statistics in the matter. They submitted a list on 14-2-1945, the Ramakrishna Mission on 30-1-1945. But in spite of these, many people are deliberately going about saying here and out in Bombay, Delhi and other places that there were many deaths due to starvation. I made it clear that certain persons were collecting subscriptions although this Government wanted no subscriptions to be collected. Subscriptions are still being collected and I make the definite charge that these subscriptions have not been properly accounted for by the people who collect them, including the members of the Servants of India Society. I understand that one or two members of the Servants of India Society went to the place, took photographs of two or three children and purported to send those photographs to America, to England, and to Northern India for the purpose of showing how badly the food situation has been handled here. All that I can say is that, all over India, notwithstanding the efforts made by that minority, it is granted that perhaps the food administration in Cochin and Travancore has been the best conducted in India. Nevertheless, there is persistent propaganda, both by questions here and newspaper statements outside the State, that there is considerable amount of starvation, and deaths due to want of food. That is the particular kind of vendetta that I have designated as both unpatriotic

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: May I know the reason for referring to the Servants of India Society?

PRESIDENT: Yes, the Servants of India Society. I said that openly and definitely. I say that Mr. Sivaswami wrote asking for particulars of starvation and he said he would pay any one who could give that information. The original is in my hands because the person to whom these letters were addressed handed them over to me. He has also written another letter which I placed on the table at a meeting, in which he wrote to be allowed to write into the accounts one figure, whereas, as a matter of fact, another amount had been spent. The originals are in the hands of Government and I challenge the Servants of India Society on the point. I have already written to Mr. Joshi and to Pandit Kunzru, but neither of them has answered. Now, that way of collection of funds and subscriptions, is a matter on which this Government hold very strong views.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know from the Government whether they have received a report of a survey made in those parts of Shertallai, wherein figures have been given of deaths due to starvation?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: We are not aware of any survey conducted by any responsible person.

PRESIDENT: Was such a report ever sent to Government?

MR. K. A. MATHEW: I understand that a copy of the report was sent to Government.

PRESIDENT: Absolutely not. It has not reached me till this minute.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: I was told that after a survey was taken by a group of students and other responsible persons, a report was sent. Did the Government.....

PRESIDENT: That is a deliberate lie which has been circulated outside Travancore. Again it was stated most, mendaciously most wickedly that Government have issued some circulars against some students who have conducted a survey. But the Government are not aware of any such thing at all.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know the reason for disallowing a question which I sent on that behalf?

PRESIDENT: After all the member is not new to this House. He considers that by putting a question, he can traverse whole lengths of controversial matters.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: My point is this. Instead of giving a direct answer, Government have disallowed it.

PRESIDENT: That is because Government are anxious, to the extent possible to disallow discussion on questions, wholly without foundation, put, according to Government, merely for the purpose of stirring up bad blood and getting some form of notoriety. For instance the allegation about deaths due to starvation in the coastal areas in Travancore is calculated to instil ill feelings.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Will the Government be pleased to institute an investigation into the matter?

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: Is the honourable member in order? The question refers to A. P. I's. message.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: In view of the controversy that has been in the Press with regard to this matter, will the Government be pleased to set up a committee of non-officials to investigate the matter?

PRESIDENT: Does not arise.

Fertilisers and Chemicals, Travancore, Ltd.

6. * **MR. K. A. MATHEW:** Will the Government be pleased to state in respect of the Fertilisers and Chemicals, Travancore, Ltd.,

- (a) the amount so far invested by the Government;
- (b) the amount otherwise collected by the sale of shares (i) in Travancore and (ii) outside Travancore;
- (c) who are the managing agents;
- (d) what is the interest of the Inter Continental Corporation in the concern;
- (e) the commitments in this concern, the concessions granted and the facilities afforded by the Government; and
- (f) the return to the Government and the advantages to the State?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: (a) Rs. 12,50,000 in shares.

- (b) (i) Rs. 7,99,940.
- (ii) Rs. 4,50,060.
- (c) Messrs Seshasayee Brothers Ltd., Trichinopoly.
- (d) None that Government are aware of.
- (e) No commitment except investment in shares. The concessions and facilities granted to the company are mentioned in the agreement with them. A copy of the agreement is placed on the Secretary's table.
- (f) The Government expect a moderate return in view to their policy of selling fertilisers at specially cheap rates. The advantages to the State expected from the production and use of fertilisers are generally recognised throughout the world.

Fertilisers and Chemicals, Travancore, Ltd.

7. * **MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI (Chirayinkil cum Nedumangad):** Will the Government be pleased to give the following information re: Fertilisers and Chemicals, Travancore, Ltd:

- (a) the authorized capital of this company;
- (b) the amount subscribed by Travancore Government;
- (c) the amount subscribed by the subjects of the State;
- (d) the terms of agreement if any entered into by Government with this company; and
- (e) the name of the managing agents of the company and the terms of the managing agency?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: (a) Authorised capital Rs. 5,00,00,000.

(b) The attention of the member is invited to the answer to part (a) of question No. 6 [395].